

CHAPTER 1.3.4.

ZONING AND REGIONALISATION

Article 1.3.4.1.

'Zoning' is a procedure implemented by a country under the provisions of this Chapter with a view to defining geographical areas of different *animal health status* within its territory for the purpose of *international trade*, and in accordance with the recommendations stipulated in the relevant Chapters [on animal diseases] in the *Code*.

Article 1.3.4.2.

[The requirements for the different types of zones vary with the disease for which they are established.] The requirements necessary to preserve the special health status of a zone must be appropriate to the particular disease. The requirements will differ and size, location and delineation of a zone will depend on the epidemiology of the disease, environmental factors, and surveillance and control measures applicable. [Separate conditions will be developed for each disease for which zoning is considered appropriate.] The extent of zones and their limits should be established by the *Veterinary Administration* on the basis of natural, artificial or legal boundaries and made public through official channels.

Thus defined, the zones constitute the relevant geographical units for the application of the recommendations in Part 2 of the *Code*.

Article 1.3.4.3.

[A country] Having established within its territory a zone in respect of a disease covered by the *Code*, and in accordance with the definitions given in the Chapter corresponding to this disease, a country must implement in and around this zone measures that meet the relevant requirements of Chapters 1.2.1., 1.2.2., 1.3.5. and 1.4.2. of the *Code*.

Article 1.3.4.4.

When an *exporting country* has defined a zone within its territory in respect of one or more of the diseases covered by the *Code*, [and] it needs to implement the measures stipulated in the *Code* for setting up and maintaining such a zone [are respected].

An importing country should recognise the existence of this zone and accept the application of the [recommendations] appropriate measures recommended in the *Code* corresponding to the *animal health status* of the zone with regard to the importation, or transit through its territory, of *commodities* from the [aforementioned] zone.

Article 1.3.4.5.

For [those] diseases [where] for which [a] procedures exist[s] whereby the OIE can officially recognise the existence of a disease free country or zone, a Member Country wishing to apply for recognition of this zone shall, via its Permanent Delegate, send the OIE all the relevant documentation relating to the zone. [The] Such documentation should be presented according to [the] guidelines [defined] prescribed by the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission [and include, in addition to all the factors contributing to a precise definition of the zone, proof of the claimed status and of the country's capacity to maintain its status; it should be accompanied by a request for inclusion in the relevant OIE list.

Appendix V (contd)

The same procedure is applicable in the case of an application for recognition of free status in respect of a given disease for the entire country.

In each case, the *Veterinary Administration* of the country making the application shall comply with all the steps in the procedure for this purpose laid down by the OIE International Committee].

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SECTION 3.8.

**RECOGNITION OF THE DISEASE/INFECTION
FREE STATUS OF A COUNTRY OR ZONE,
AND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE
SYSTEMS**

APPENDIX 3.8.0.

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RECOGNISING A
COUNTRY OR ZONE FREE FROM A GIVEN
DISEASE/INFECTION**

Article 3.8.0.1.

Introduction

[There is an increasing demand for guidelines for recognition of disease/infection freedom of countries and zones. The *International Animal Health Code* (the *Code*) outlines specific requirements for recognising freedom from certain List A and B diseases.] The present [document] Appendix provides general principles for declaring a country or zone free from disease/infection in relation to the time of last occurrence, and in particular for the recognition of historical freedom.

An essential prerequisite to provide the guarantees required for the recognition of freedom from disease/infection is that the *Veterinary Services* of the Member Country comply with the provisions of Chapter 1.3.3. [of the *Code* for the] on evaluation of *Veterinary Services*, and, if relevant, with the provisions of Chapter 1.3.4. on zoning and regionalisation.

The provisions of this [document] Appendix are based on the following [general principles] premises:

- 1) in the absence of disease and vaccination, the animal population would become susceptible over a period of time;
- 2) the disease agents to which these provisions apply are likely to produce identifiable clinical signs in susceptible animals;
- 3) competent and effective *Veterinary Services* will be able to investigate, diagnose and report disease, if present;
- 4) the absence of disease/infection over a long period of time in a susceptible population can be substantiated by effective disease investigation and reporting by the *Veterinary Services* of an OIE Member Country.

Appendix VI (contd)

Article 3.8.0.2.

Definitions

[For the purposes of this document the following definitions apply:]

Infection: Entry and multiplication of the agent in the host. For the purposes of the *Code* the presence of the agent in the host is equivalent to infection.

Disease: Clinical and/or pathological manifestation of infection.

Disease occurrence: Confirmed evidence of disease.

Eradication: Elimination of an animal pathogen so that no further cases of infection can occur.

Early detection system: A system under the control of the *Veterinary Services* for the timely detection and identification of animal diseases. Characteristics of the system must include:

- representative coverage of target animal populations by field services;
- ability to undertake effective disease investigation and reporting;
- access to laboratories capable of diagnosing and differentiating relevant diseases;
- a training programme for veterinarians and para-veterinarians for detecting and reporting unusual disease occurrence.

Measures to prevent disease/infection introduction: Import requirements to prevent the introduction of disease/infection as outlined in the *Code*.

Specific surveillance: Surveillance targeted to a specific disease or infection.

Article 3.8.0.3.

Requirements to declare a country or zone free from infection

1) Historically free

These provisions apply to all *List A* and *List B* diseases, excluding transmissible spongiform encephalopathies.

A country or zone may be recognised free from infection without formally applying a specific surveillance programme when:

- a) there has never been occurrence of disease; or
- b) eradication has been achieved or the disease/infection has ceased to occur for at least 25 years,

provided that for at least the past 10 years and to the present:

- c) it has been a notifiable disease;

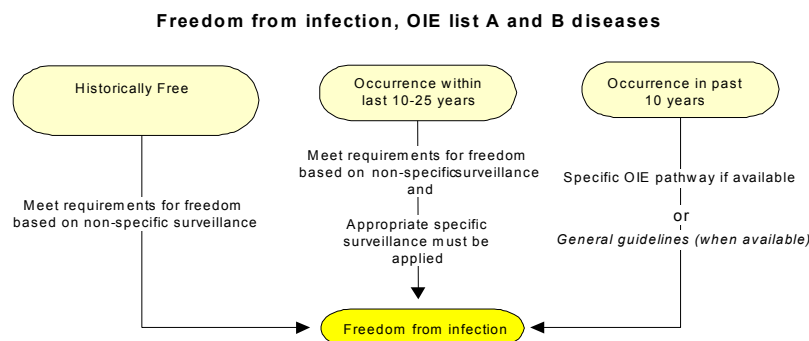
- d) an early detection system has been in place;
- e) measures to prevent disease/infection introduction have been in place;
- f) no vaccination against the disease has been carried out;
- g) infection is not known to be established in wildlife.

2) Last occurrence between 10 and 25 years previously

For countries or zones that have achieved eradication (or in which the disease/infection has ceased to occur) between 10 and 25 years previously, in addition to the above conditions, appropriate specific surveillance must have been applied to demonstrate the absence of the agent.

3) Last occurrence within the past 10 years

Countries or zones that have achieved eradication within the past 10 years (or in which the disease/infection has ceased to occur) should follow the specific disease surveillance requirements in the Code if they exist or the general guidelines for surveillance outlined in the *Code*.



Article 3.8.0.4.

Guidelines for the discontinuation of specific surveillance after recognition of freedom from infection

A country that has been recognised free from infection following the provisions of the *Code* may discontinue specific surveillance while maintaining the infection-free status provided that:

- 1) it is a notifiable disease;
- 2) an early detection system is in place;
- 3) measures to prevent disease/infection introduction are in place;
- 4) vaccination against the disease is not applied;
- 5) infection is known not to be established in wildlife.

Appendix VI (contd)

Article 3.8.0.5. (former Article 1.3.4.5.)

International recognition of disease/infection free status

For those diseases where [a] procedures exist[s] whereby the OIE can officially recognise the existence of a disease free country or zone, a Member Country wishing to apply for recognition of this [zone] status shall, via its Permanent Delegate, send the OIE all the relevant documentation relating to [the zone] it. The documentation should be presented according to the guidelines defined by the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission and include, in addition to all the factors contributing to a precise definition of the zone, proof of the claimed status and of the country's capacity to maintain its status; it should be accompanied by a request for inclusion in the relevant OIE list.

[The same procedure is applicable in the case of an application for recognition of free status in respect of a given disease for the entire country.]

In each case, the *Veterinary Administration* of the country making the application shall comply with all the steps in the procedure for this purpose laid down by the OIE International Committee.

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**SHORT HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON THE
GENESIS OF APPENDIX 3.8.0. ON
GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RECOGNISING A COUNTRY OR
ZONE FREE FROM A GIVEN DISEASE/INFECTION**

1. Extracts from the report of the meeting of the OIE Ad hoc Group on Guidelines for Surveillance and Monitoring of Animal Diseases (Paris, 28 - 30 September 1999)

The Ad hoc Group had to address a specific request from the Bureau of the Code Commission on the conditions needed to declare a country free of a disease without formally applying a specific surveillance programme.

The Ad hoc Group prepared [a] document to address this request. The document along with the comments from the Working Group on Informatics and Epidemiology will be submitted to the Code Commission for consideration at its next meeting in January 2000.

2. Extracts from the report of the meeting of the OIE Ad hoc Group on Guidelines for Surveillance and Monitoring of Animal Diseases (Paris, 28-30 March 2000)

The Ad hoc Group began its deliberations by taking into account the comments issued by the Working Group on Informatics and Epidemiology in October 1999 on [the document prepared during] the previous meeting (conditions needed to recognise a country free of a given animal disease without applying specific surveillance programmes). As the discussion on the text progressed, the Ad hoc Group restructured the contents, and also concluded that the text not only provided guidelines for declaring that a country has a history of freedom from a given animal disease, but also provided for the other contexts in which a country could be recognised as disease free. The participants considered that there was no reason why the principles selected for a country should not also be applicable to a zone. At the request of the International Animal Health Code Commission, the Ad hoc Group introduced the concept of quality of the Veterinary Services into the text, adding a reference in the introduction to chapter 1.4.3. [in the 2001 edition of the *Code*: chapter 1.3.3.] of the *International Animal Health Code* (the *Code*), which relates to the evaluation of Veterinary Services.

All these considerations led to the development of a revised document, now entitled: General principles for recognising a country or zone free from a given animal disease/infection.
